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E S S A Y,

ON THE

Nature, Causes, and Cure,

OF THE

RHEUMATISM:

BEING

An ATTEMPT to form an exact THEORY
of the DISEASE,

AND

Facilitate the Means of acquiring Relief to those
who are unfortunately subject to its Attacks.

To which are added,

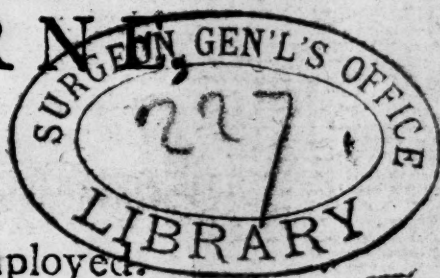
Observations on the Medical Treatment

OF

The Rev. Mr. STERNE,
During his last Illness.

POINTING OUT

The IMPROPRIETY of the MEANS employed.



LONDON Printed,

And Sold by Mr. ROBINSON, Paternoster-Row,

By Mr. GARDNER, in the Strand,

And by the Booksellers in BATH and BRISTOL.

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P R E F A C E.

THE private practice of any man should never be obtruded on the Public, unless recommended by the superior excellence of his system or extraordinary success. But if new lights can be thrown on the obscurity which at present envelopes our knowledge of the nature and causes of diseases, if a definition more simple, yet more perfect, can be given, or a new method of cure proposed for the relief of those public calamities, the practitioner is authorized for sending abroad his observations, and the public for his benevolent endeavours, at least owe him their thanks.

HAD not these last considerations influenced my conduct, the world, perhaps, would never have heard of me as an Author. I know too well the difficulties a man exposes himself to, who resolves

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upon

upon displaying his sentiments in print. Opinions unknown can never be controverted, and the world is not able to afflict him who has not courted its favor. The man over whose cheeks was never spread the glow of emulation, passes thro' life secure from the world's censure or its praise, and leaves to more active minds and warmer hearts, the troublesome distinctions of singularity and eminence.

THE principles and practice I here recommend, are such as I have drawn from an application of what appeared to me, the most sound physiology to the cure of one of the most troublesome complaints our bodies are subject to. I found that from my endeavours a more certain and simple theory resulted; I experienced what is yet far more satisfactory, that the cure was more easy and sure. It pointed out to me whence the errors of practice arose, and by what means they might be in a
great

great measure prevented and remedied. It has enabled me to communicate relief to the wasting agonies of multitudes ; a capacity which warms my heart with the noblest exultations, and which in undertaking this publication I was more desirous of communicating to others, than anxious of distinction or expectant of profit.

In the early parts of life I had a motive of the most persuasive kind to prompt me to an examination of the nature and causes of the Rheumatism, being for several years subject to its most cruel ravages. In vain did I apply to the celebrated in the profession ; their attempts constantly proved fruitless, and the violence of the disease, instead of abating, increased. At this time I had but as it were commenced the study of Medicine ; and tho' my enquiries were particularly led to this disorder, I could not presume so far as to undertake my own cure. But at length
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finding no relief assured to me from others, and imagining I found several fundamental errors in the proceedings of those under whose care I was placed, I resolved to hazard my own principles. Happily the event answered my most sanguine wishes. I recovered the use of my limbs, and have never since been afflicted. Confirmed by the most happy experience of the truth of my principles, I would willingly impart them to the public. The relief they have enabled me to communicate to the afflicted in this disorder, I am anxious to extend by this publication, and shall reflect with pleasure on the attempt, if found the least instrumental in diminishing the bitter position of those who are unfortunately under the oppression of it.

In examining the common methods of treating the Rheumatism, I could not but observe how very essential it was to distinguish properly the causes whence the complaint

complaint arises. The most active remedies I observ'd, from a want of attention to this, proved more prejudicial than useful. And it likewise often happened that the long administration of a remedy that had already frequently succeeded, produced no favorable effect. Hence practitioners startled at the inefficacy of their remedy at one time, and their success at another, concluded the nature of the disease to be inscrutable, and by that uncertainty which naturally resulted therefrom, when applied to for relief, their answers were rather adapted to excite the afflicted to a patient sufferance of their calamity, than to hope for a cure.

This consideration has prompted me to be particular in describing the different species of the disease. For as the errors of the present practice arise from mistaking them, I concluded the most probable method of remedying the defect, was to distinguish

tinguish the different species so far as to comprehend nearly every possible case. The practitioner in noticing my distinctions, will derive more particularly those advantages therefrom; he will commence the cure at almost all times certain of the event, and avoid those evils which so frequently result from the misapplication of the most-excellent remedies. He will be able to pronounce with certainty where the event appears dubious, how far the continuance of the symptoms may prove injurious to the constitution, and whenever success follows not his endeavours, will be able to discern the cause whence the impracticability arises.

I have not been assiduous to communicate *formulae*, or indicate the particular remedies I have used in the different cases that have passed under my care. An intelligent practitioner when he is shewn the indications he must pursue, is at no loss
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to proceed. His knowledge of the qualities of remedies will point out to him various compositions that will produce the effect desired. To perfect the practice of Medicine, we want not to discover new remedies, we have already an immense number to answer every indication*. The chief thing necessary to acquire, is that knowledge which will enable us *to administer with certainty* those remedies we already possess. To accomplish this, a knowledge of the causes and indications is the principal thing required. Hence I have endeavoured to demonstrate both with the greatest accuracy and plainness possible. Whether I have succeeded or not, the application of the theory here given,

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must

* Tho' I deny not but there are many excellent productions in nature unknown to us, that might prove of the most salutary effect in the many diseases flesh is heir to, of hidden specific Virtue, and reserved by the Almighty for future generations. I would rather be understood here as speaking of chymical preparations, the *modus* of whose operation is very well known.

must decide. I flatter myself that I shall not be found mistaken when I say, that the practice here recommended must succeed. The success of doctrines grounded on conjecture only, is very uncertain; but those which are the fruits of no hypothesis, but the simple result of the application of the laws of the animal œconomy to the cure of diseases, must carry the strongest evidence with them, and when applied, cannot fail of the desired effect.

My intention in examining the methods made use of in treating the Rev. Mr. *Sterne*, during his last illness, is to excite practitioners to a more liberal manner of proceeding than is commonly employed. Ill success frequently follows the endeavours made use of to cure a disease from a too strict attention to the apparent symptoms only, and what may be termed a religious attachment to ancient modes of practice. I would willingly excite all those who are
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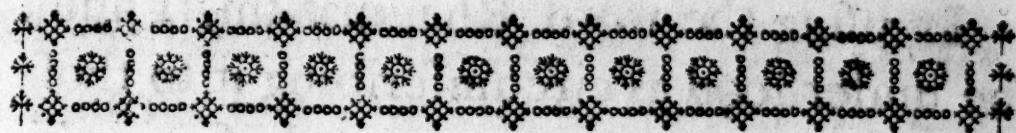
engaged in the treatment of diseases constantly to recur to the first principles of things, and instead of being satisfied with discovering the name and symptoms of a disease, determine wherein the disorder consists within, recollect what is the healthy state of the simple fibres, and be assured of the manner in which these fibres are affected during the disease : For certain it is, that no constant success can ever attend that man's practice, who is content with the mere definition of a disease, and the methods of cure as delivered by authors, unless he considers the change that is produced by the disease on the simple organic fibre, and proceeds accordingly. The neglect of this is what renders the practice of physic so extremely precarious.

It is strange that the ill success attending the common modes of practice, has not had greater effect in prompting practitioners to change their methods of proceeding.

ceeding. The frequent ill-success following their endeavours, the indeterminate purposes for which remedies are often administered, the confused and unsatisfactory attempts to account for the symptoms and causes of complaints, one might reasonably expect, would have rendered the spirit of improvement more general than it is. The sufferings of mankind must be no small incentive. But those engaged in the practice of medicine have been long since, too justly accused of *insensibility*; the *most cruel insensibility*! that can look unconcerned at the expiring agonies of the greatest ornaments of humanity, at the departing groans of our tenderest connections, hurried out of life by ignorance, or left to perish from neglect.

E R R A T A.

Page 1, line 16, read *hurry*; page 2, line 22, read *practitioners*; page 8, line 2, a ? page 14, line 6, read *it should*; page 20, line 16, read *definition*; page 31, line 12, read *increases*; page 30, line one, after *done* read a comma; page 31, line 5, for *use*, read *cure*.



An E S S A Y, &c.

IF all the diseases to which the human body is exposed, none is more frequently to be met with, nor more painful in its attacks, than that which is the subject of this Essay. In almost every climate, we observe multitudes of human beings subject to this excruciating malady ; and in this country more particularly, we find few persons, especially among those of an advanced age, that are free from it. The pains accompanying it are more or less acute, a diversity occasioned by causes which shall hereafter be recounted : in some attacking with such violence as to disorder even the mental faculties, and hurrying the wretched sufferer to the grave ; in others, tho' less violent, yet by their frequent returns, undermining the constitution, and embittering all the enjoyments of life.

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IN using the word Rheumatism, I must be understood as circumscribing it to those complaints which are commonly so term'd, viz. Pains of the Limbs, Breast, Shoulders, &c. The term nevertheless has a much more comprehensive signification, as the Phrenitis, Pleurisy, Peripneumony, and all other local inflammations, are acute Rheumatisms, distinct as they afflict different parts, and injudiciously distinguished by medical writers under different denominations; an error of the worst consequence, rendering the science complex, and the practice uncertain.

As the admitting the word Rheumatism, in this general signification, would engage me in matters of a too complicated nature for the intention of this Essay, I shall employ it in the common acceptation, and confine it to those complaints which are vulgarly termed Rheumatic: for in the treatment of these, practitioners are generally less successful than in that of the former. Whether the extreme danger accompanying the internal inflammation, has prompted them to a more strict examination

mination of its nature and causes, or whether the more frequent application made to them for the relief of these cases, has afforded them opportunities of improving their practice by the multitude of experiments they must necessarily have made, 'tis uncertain. Practice however has been hitherto tolerably successful in the treatment of internal inflammations: but the treatment of external by internal remedies, is very defective; the patient being most commonly advised to resign himself wholly to the efforts of nature, or bade to despair of relief. Or wherever a practitioner is found arduous enough to undertake the treatment of these cases, we observe that those liberal principles which have long since been introduced into medicine, to the improvement of the antient forms of treating internal inflammations, are neglected here; the disease being commonly attacked with heating Alexipharmacs, nature is thereby impeded from making its friendly exertions, and the violence of the disease commonly increased.

THE human body by its structure (such is the will of infinite Wisdom) is liable to pain and to death. Death consists in the total cessation of the vital motions, and pain in the partial obstruction of them.

PAIN is produced by various causes; whatever tends to injure our frame produces pain. Of these causes such as injure it by impeding the circulatory motion of its fluids, produce that disease or branch of diseases, which is denominated Rheumatism.

THE causes which conduce to impede the circulation are Spasms produced by irritating substances, an acrimonious or scorbutical state of the blood, its too much crassamentum, a too viscid state of the fluids, their too great abundance, an infirm state of the solids, their rigidity and ligatures too tightly fixed on the limbs.

As these are all the causes which serve to impede the regular circulation of our fluids, they are all that are productive of the Rheumatism. Every rheumatic disease must be produced by these causes
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more or less combined. And so opposite are some of the causes, to each other, that a neglect or mistake in the discovery of those which are more particularly productive of the complaint, must render all attempts to work a cure ineffectual and oftentimes occasion great injury to the constitution of the patient. And as these causes are so essentially different, 'tis clear the most certain method of proceeding to effect a cure, must be to investigate with certainty the cause or causes productive of the disease. As this matter has not hitherto been sufficiently explained, tho' it appears of the utmost consequence, I have undertaken the task of defining the different species of the disorder, shewing which is peculiar to each constitution, and pointing out the different indications necessary to be followed, in order to perfect a cure.

I flatter myself that in displaying the prejudices that may arise from an injudicious treatment, in censuring the indiscriminate administration of quack remedies, recommended for the cure of this disease, and demonstrating the way by
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which the practitioner may proceed with certainty and success, I have done all that is incumbent on me, and no more than philanthropy will justify. The little information communicated by books respecting this disease, the ill success commonly ensuing the endeavours of practitioners to communicate relief, the facility with which I have frequently worked a cure, in adhering to the system here given, and the simple uniformity of this system excited me to this publication.

THE reader will perhaps object to the pleaded necessity of this work, the number of medicines that at various times has been recommended as infallible in the cure of this disease; he may oppose to me the celebrity of JAMES' POWDER, with other similar remedies, and alledge their powerful effects. But let the afflicted beware of the boasting pretensions of those who are interested in the disposal of them; let them suspect the few solitary cases published in testimony of their efficacy, and not too credulously confide in the recommendation of them, by persons who cannot

cannot have had sufficient opportunity to discover the full effects of the remedy, and are without skill sufficient to decide on the propriety of the administration of it. For it must be evident to every person who reflects on the causes assigned above, as productive of this disease, that it rarely happens two cases will admit of the same medical treatment. What ill effects then must ensue the indiscriminate administration of the many powerful empirical remedies, that are so universally recommended to the public? If administered to a patient where the cause and constitution accidentally favour their operation, success may ensue; but if, as it by far more frequently happens, neither one nor the other is favorable thereto, the loss of life or the ruin of the constitution must certainly follow the use of them. Even the remedies of the shops, tho' of milder operation than the fore-mentioned, and in the hands of men practiced in the treatment of diseases, are often-times productive of injury, when the cause is mistaken. How much reason therefore is there to recommend

commend caution in the administration of the most active preparations. I am not for entirely discarding these remedies from practice, they may be of service in particular cases, in the hands of an intelligent practitioner, who is assured of the indications he must pursue. I would only discommend the use of them by those, who ignorant of the principles of medicine, prescribe them to the poor and ignorant, murdering one half of those who unfortunately fall into their hands, and irretrievably debilitating the constitutions of the rest.

To demonstrate yet more clearly the necessity of discovering the origin of the complaint, before any remedy is administered, let the reader but slightly examine the ill effects the same methods of cure must produce where the causes are different.

THE most frequent Rheumatisms are produced either by an acrimonious state of the blood, or its too great viscosity or density. Where there is an acrimonious state of the fluids, there is commonly a dissolution of them likewise, but more particularly

ticularly so where there is an appearance of a scorbutical taint. Now as this state of the body is entirely opposite to the other where there is a visciduity of the fluids, 'tis evident that the methods of cure must be contrary likewise. In the dissolved state of the blood, such remedies are required as will conduce to restore it to its primitive consistency; in the other such as will attenuate it.-----A mistake here must be productive of the worst consequence; attenuating remedies where the blood is already colliquative, must hurry the patient to the grave; and astringent inspissating ones where the fluids are already too dense, must fix the disease in the part affected for ever.

THAT celebrated remedy, the Cortex Peruvianus, or as it is called from its superior excellence the BARK, being unskillfully administered, has oftentimes produced this last effect; but it is evident I apprehend, from what has preceded, that the ill consequence following the use of it, must be attributed to its misapplication, not to the drug itself.

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A remedy which enters almost every recipe recommended in this disorder, is the Volatile Tincture of Gum Guaiacum. The little success which commonly attends the use of it, sufficiently discredits it. But nevertheless let us examine its effects on the constitution, and distinguish where it may be administered with advantage, and where the use of it must be productive of prejudice.

THIS Tincture is prepared by infusing a certain quantity of Gum Guaiacum, in the Volatile Spirit of Sal Ammoniac.----- The Gum Guaiacum is found to be moderately irritating and corroborant, the Spirit a powerful dissolvent of the fluids, and the use of it ever attended with great heat and an accelerated circulation. In what cases then can this remedy be successfully administered? If given in a dissolved state of the fluids, it must augment their dissolution, and may produce by its irritating quality some dangerous hæmorrhage. If given when the blood is too dense, unless with proper precautions, by causing

ing a greater afflux of humours to the diseased part, the pain must undoubtedly be increased, the minima vascula may be ruptured, and the disease thereby rendered incureable by any remedy whatever. Let us only reflect on the effects it must produce on a plethoric constitution, where the cause is the too great abundance of blood, where the vessels from their too great distension, can scarcely contract on their contained fluids; a case of which I was an eye-witness, will best serve to display its pernicious effects.----A gentleman that had been long afflicted with Rheumatic pains, robust, and of a plethoric habit, was advised to make use of the Volatile Tincture of Guaiacum. He took in consequence thereof a somewhat large dose at his usual hour of going to rest, with intention to sweat it out, as is usually expressed: but after being in bed about an hour, he found himself uncommonly restless, with great heat, and his pains more violent than ordinary. Thinking the effects would gradually wear off, he refused any assistance should be called, 'till finding afterwards

the symptoms to increase, he desired relief. I found him labouring under the greatest anxiety, at intervals delirious, his respiration difficult, and exceedingly quick, his eyes greatly inflamed, the reticular web of the cheeks distended with red blood, a most violent pain in the head and back, and unable to lay down. Upon being told what he had taken over night, I was at no loss to account for the dreadful symptoms with which he was attacked, and the information enabled me to employ with greater certainty, the proper remedies for his recovery.

IN a plethoric habit the vessels are distended to their utmost capacity, and in this case, 'tis probable, their extreme distension caused these pains of which the patient complained previous to the use of the remedy. The administration of an irritating preparation in this case could happen only from the adviser's extreme ignorance of the animal œconomy. The action of the remedy here given must greatly increase the intestine motion of the blood, and accelerate the circulation; the
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nervous coats of the vessels must thereby be forced to make the most powerful efforts to prevent a rupture of them. The case here mentioned was of a person of strong fibres. The firm texture of the vessels opposed the ill effect of the remedy till assistance could be given them. Had help been delayed, the tone of the fibres must infallibly have been lost for ever. If (supposing the case, as such has undoubtedly many times happened, and may again) the patient had been a female of plethoric habit, and her frame endowed with that high degree of sensibility which is peculiar to many individuals of the sex, how dreadful must have been the effects! The annals of Medicine will inform us-----
instant convulsions and death.

My intention however, is not to decry the remedy which sometimes proves a beneficial one; but only to prompt the afflicted to be cautious in the use of it. This Tincture may be of service in sluggish humid habits, by exciting a gentle and constant perspiration, and thereby evacuating the super-abundant humidity. The volatile

volatile alkaline spirit which enters its composition, may render it beneficial likewise, as a dissolvent in a dense viscid state of the fluids; but to prevent the ill effects which would otherwise ensue from its heating quality, should be taken in small doses and well diluted. But there are remedies more safe, and not less efficacious, which in this case undoubtedly ought to be preferred.

THE Antimonial Wine is liable to yet greater objections. This preparation is administered indiscriminately to all ages and all constitutions. Its operation is violently irritating, and consequently destructive to bodies of delicate structure, and strong sensibility. It can manifestly be never administered to any but robust bodies, where there is no plethora, and when the obstructing matter is yet fluid. For robust fibres may be able to sustain the increased efforts which this remedy must occasion by its powerful irritation. If there be a plethora, the ill effects must ensue that are just described as happening after the administration of the volatile preparations

parations of Guaiacum. And I here particularly mention, that the obstructing matter must be yet fluid at the time this remedy is administered, that the reader may observe, wherever there is found an obstruction, all stimulating remedies must conduce only to impel the matter occasioning the obstruction into more minute vessels, where if it be not fluid, it may rest immoveable during life. This remedy if administered to bodies otherwise circumstanced, has been known to produce inflammations, convulsions and death.

LET the reader but imagine what ill effects must ensue the administration of any irritating remedy, such as the fore-mentioned, when there is already a spasm of the nervous system; and the Rheumatism is always accompany'd with spasms. Every symptom must be heightened thereby, and the patient, unless blessed with strong fibres, will run the greatest hazard of his life.-----
What service can the same remedies produce where there is a viscid state of the fluids, or when the blood abounds with too much crassamentum? The continual
irritation

irritation of the remedies by impelling the globules already fixed in vessels of too small a diameter to receive them, to yet smaller, must weaken the tone of the fibres, and render the disease permanent and incurable.

I CANNOT refrain condemning the indiscriminate recommendation of JAMES' POWDERS, as published in nearly every news-paper in the kingdom. I have slightly noticed their ill effects already, but the public has a claim to a more particular demonstration of them. These powders are possessed of all the ill qualities of the fore-mentioned remedies, and not of any of the good ones. I cannot persuade myself the persons engaged in publishing this remedy are ignorant of the many ill effects these powders must produce when administered in many such cases for which they recommend them. They are confidently described in various publications as an assured antidote for the disease which is the subject of this Essay. The proprietors, being, as I am informed, men engaged in the practice of Medicine, cannot
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be ignorant of the pernicious effects they must produce in all cases where irritation is dangerous. Administered in this or any other disease to sensible habits, in cases where there are already spasms of the nervous system, the consequence must be of the most dreadful kind. The operation of this remedy is that of a very powerful irritant; now we well know there are some cases where irritation is dangerous; there are some bodies likewise which irritation will at all times prejudice, and sometimes destroy. For irritation is a violence committed on the constitution, and employed by judicious practitioners only on the most urgent occasions. When they observe nature tardy in its operations, they employ the class of remedies productive of this effect to quicken its efforts, and shake off the lethargy creeping over the frame. But they with caution previously examine if the state of the fibres be such as will admit of being excited to very powerful efforts. If the body be found endued with sufficient strength, if the organization is firm, robust, the shock occasioned by these remedies,

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medies, may prove of beneficial effect, and be easily recovered from. But if on the contrary, the constitution is without strength, if the fibres be of delicate texture, incapable of being forced to make the slightest efforts, as is found to be the case with more than half of the human-kind, they prudently desist, knowing that irritation must infallibly destroy the machine. Can these things be unknown to those who so eagerly recommend the indiscriminate use of these powders? Must they not be well assured that they are recommending a preparation that will prove an active poison, unless employ'd with the utmost precaution, to all but robust habits? And that even when administered to robust habits, unless the body be well prepared for its operation, it shakes (if I may be allowed the expression) all the pillars of life.

I decry not the general use of this preparation merely from reflecting on the effects it must produce on the human frame, but from having observ'd at different times, the dangerous consequences the injudicious use of it has occasioned. I knew an agreeable

agreeable female in London, mother of a large family, torn from the embraces of a disconsolate husband, from the prayers and lamentations of an inconsolable family, by a mortification of the intestines, occasioned by the imprudent use of this remedy. I knew the only son of an honorable house in this county, just bordering on manhood, the family's hope and pride, that from the injudicious administration of these powders during the attack of a fever, was immediately seized with a frenzy, which soon ended in death. Many instances of a similar nature I could produce, but I love not to dwell upon afflicting subjects, and the reader will undoubtedly dispense with the narration, as I dare suppose his heart on this occasion, refuses not sympathizing with mine. Even the proprietors of the powders themselves seem to be convinced of the ill effects that frequently ensue the use of them : for hence arise those cautions against purchasing counterfeits, so frequently inculcated ; they prudently attributing whatever injury arises from the use of the remedy, to some sophisticated imitation.

I apprehend that from what precedes no one will be at a loss to account for the ill-success which has hitherto attended the attempts made for curing this disease; for it must be evident, that unless the practitioner previously forms to himself a true idea of the cause of the complaint, all his endeavours will be frustrated. And that the general ill success that has hitherto attended the attempts made to cure the Rheumatism is owing to this, there is no doubt, as I remember not to have seen any author who has given any theory of the disease, that has been authorized by practice, nor can I recollect any practitioner that could give that definition of it, as comprehended every possible case. What I have here advanced, is the fruit of observation, drawn from a very extensive practice. I have been happily instrumental to the relief of many, and would willingly give some clue to the progress of others on similar occasions. I would prevent the future massacre of my species, by the injudicious administration of irritating remedies, and contribute something to-

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wards enabling those whose business it is, to undertake more successfully the cure of this most excruciating malady.

Of the Acute Rheumatism.

The Rheumatism is either *acute* or *chronic*.——In the acute Rheumatism there is a spasmodic affection of some part of the body, as the arms, breast, back, &c. accompany'd with great pains, an accelerated pulse, restlessness, the common concomitants of inflammatory diseases. This complaint owes its origin frequently to an interrupted perspiration. The fluid which nature intended to be discharged from the surface of the body, being restrained by the cold air closing the pores, is collected under the skin, and frequently received again into the blood. If carried to the intestines, an inflammation often succeeds, unless prevented by a diarrhea; the lungs, kidneys, &c. are exposed to the same danger, for the perspirable matter being prevented escaping, and without motion, loses its innocent nature, becomes acrimonious

acrimonious, and excites spasms wherever it may happen to settle. If instead of being returned to the blood, it continues among the muscles of the external parts, tho' the effect be essentially the same as it produces on the lungs, stomach, intestines, &c. it nevertheless goes under the denomination of the Rheumatism. The difference of the inflammation of these viscera, and the external inflammatory Rheumatism, is in name only. The danger attending these complaints is nevertheless vastly unequal. For the particular structure of the lungs, stomach, intestines, &c. dispose them to inflammations of the most painful and destructive kind. These parts abound with nerves and blood-vessels, and the action of the acrid perspirable matter thereon, must much more disorder their functions, than those of a part less nervous, as the muscles and integuments of the superficies of the body. Besides, one reason, the effect is not so dangerous on the muscles, as on the internal viscera, is, the actions of each being disordered thereby, these of the muscles are not of that extreme

treme importance, as those of the others. In the one the motion of a particular part only is impeded, in the other the functions indispensably necessary to life.

Another method by which the acute Rheumatism is produced, and which I do not remember to have seen noticed, is this, a person after any laborious exercise, exposes himself to the cool air, or discontinuing his motion suddenly, continues still in a frigid atmosphere. To discover the effects of this injudicious conduct, we must first reflect on the state of the body during exercise. The oscillatory motion of the vessels being increased, the red globules of the blood, when this motion has been long continued, are often-times protruded into vessels destined to receive the serum. It is thus perfected, the internal air being rarified, expands and increases the diameter of the vessels; the capillary tubes being enlarged, are disposed to receive the blood which now flows to them with greater impetuosity and more abundantly than at other times, by the quickened motion of the heart. The ferous

ous vessels, so termed as being in their natural state too minute to receive the red globules of the blood, have their diameter increased likewise. Hence oftentimes a quantity of these red globules enter at such times, and if the increased contraction of the arterial system decreases gradually, by the motion of the body being gradually discontinued, these globules retreat imperceptibly to the vessels adapted to receive them: on the contrary, if by a sudden accession of cold air, water, or by a sudden cessation of motion, an instant contraction of the vascular system is produced, the red globules continue pent up in the narrow tubes of the serous vessels, form obstructions and strictures of the most painful kind. These yield to few remedies, but will be chiefly relieved by repeated exercise alone.

If the fluids of a person so circumstanced, happen to be affected with a scorbutical taint, or otherwise disposed to an acrimonious quality, or if the person thus afflicted be of a sensible habit, the reader will easily imagine what a disorder may thereby

thereby be produced throughout the whole system.

The mode of treatment necessary to be pursued in the acute Rheumatism, is that employed in all general or local inflammations. As the doctrine and treatment of inflammations are now well-understood, it must not be expected that I enlarge upon the treatment of this particular species of the Rheumatism here. Venesection, with cooling, relaxing remedies, must inevitably relieve. Antimonials, Mercurials, Volatile Tinctures, &c. must undoubtedly augment the complaint, unless administered just when the spasm ceases, or in other words, when nature has just overcome the disease. Frequent and copious bleedings produce the most favorable effect, the strength of the patient being ever considered---I have often observed, not in this disease only, but in other local inflammations, the futility of small evacuations by Venesection. The decrease throughout the whole system being but small, what beneficial change can be supposed to be effected thereby in a remote part? Copious

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bleeding

bleeding is seldom practiced in the acute Rheumatism. I nevertheless have great reason to recommend the more frequent use of it. I employed it once contrary to the advice of an eminent physician on myself, and succeeded. I have employed it likewise many times since in the treatment of others, with the most beneficial effect. The criterion I go by, is the violence of the pains; I repeat Venesection as in pleuritic cases, 'till the patient is relieved. The revulsion occasioned thereby carries off the matter producing the complaint, from the part affected. As this operation is repeated, the pulse becomes gradually more open and less tense. If this change be not perceived, it will be necessary to have recourse to other means likewise. Relaxing and diluting remedies in this case are indicated. But in the generality of cases these are not wanted; bleeding by itself most commonly suffices.

'Tis a great error in practice, to abstain from Venesection on account of the weakness of the patient. The debility ought rather to be regarded as an incentive to

to bleeding. Where the vessels are become weak, it must not be supposed that they are capable of conveying the same mass of blood, as when in their perfect strength. A quick tremulous pulse is at such times observed, owing to the resistance the fluids oppose to the debilitated vessels. Bleeding, by taking off the oppression, in this case ever succeeds, and the pulse becomes more full and more regular. Hence it is that I have found bleeding productive of the most beneficial effect to those who have been greatly exhausted by the violence of the disease. It has served to relieve nature, as it were from a burthen, and to give it power to make its utmost exertions. It is a practice not common; the success I have met with in employing it, nevertheless renders it worthy of notice.

It must be observed, that there is a manifest similarity between the acute and scorbutical Rheumatism, which must be cautiously attended to. The symptoms are very like. The acute affects the body perhaps but once during life; and if

it should return, 'tis generally after long intervals; it being only a partial and temporary change of our fluids. The scorbutic is oftentimes equally severe in its attacks, but then its returns are more frequent, and not long delayed; it being an universal change of the fluids, and continues frequently unremedied for years. The necessity of this caution is apparent. The acute requiring repeated bleedings, diluents, and nitrous remedies; the scorbutical must be prejudiced by this mode of treatment; it seldom requires bleeding, but on the contrary, must be remedied by the administration of mucilaginous substances, of corroborant remedies and sudorifics.

As I regard the scorbutical Rheumatism as a chronic disease, I shall treat of it in that part of this work, which immediately follows.

Of the Chronic Rheumatism.

THE distinction between the *acute* and *chronic* Rheumatism, is, that the former

mer is tranſient and ſudden in its attacks, occaſioned by a partial change of the fluids of the body; the other long-continued, creeping on the conſtitution gradually, often produced by a general change of the fluids, ſometimes alone, but more frequently joined with a diſorder of the ſolids.

The chronic Rheumatism may be produced by more numerous cauſes than the acute. We arrange under this denomination, all thoſe pains, aches, &c. to which ſuch multitudes are expoſed, and which commonly afflicts thoſe who are once ſubject thereto, 'till the end of their days. 'Tis this ſpecies of the complaint which moſt frequently demands our care. The acute commonly terminates very ſoon, by the mere efforts of nature; the chronic never, but every freſh attack more and more undermining the conſtitution, and reminding us of the approach of death.

As I have demonſtrated that unleſs a true judgment be formed of the particular nature of the complaint, no relief will enſue the moſt powerful attempts to remove it, on the contrary that much injury may be

be done. I'll strive to instruct the reader how to judge of each case with certainty, so as seldom to be disappointed of success.

I have said above, that all the causes productive of the Rheumatism, were spasms excited by irritating substances, an acrimonious or scorbutical state of the blood, its too great abundance, too much crassamentum, or solid parts in the blood, a viscid state of the fluids, an infirm or rigid state of the solids, and tight ligatures on the limbs.

Spasms produced by irritating substances constitute one species of the Rheumatism. The imprudent and excessive use of Mercurial and Antimonial Preparations, often produce this cruel complaint. Received into the vessels, and circulating there, their particles are carried into the small tubes too minute to let them pass, stop in their narrow cavities, and occasion frequent spasms. Sulphur Antimonii Auratum, Mercurius dulcis, and the Precipitates being indissoluble by the fluids of our bodies, continue thus fixed in the capillary tubes a great length of time, excite frequent
spasms

spasms, more especially when the body is somewhat warmed, and the motion of the blood accelerated. Persons who during their youth have made use of mercurial preparations for the use of venereal complaints, are greatly liable to ills of this nature. And the injudicious custom of some practitioners of giving the fore-mentioned mercurial and antimonial preparations, for the cure of the Rheumatism, often increase the violence of the disease, the remedies augmenting the irritation.---- If the fluids happen not to be depraved, the pains are seldom of the most acute kind, and as after a length of years the sensibility of the irritated fibres decay, the patient rather experiences a numbness in the part affected, and is pleased with the change. This species is more troublesome to a man's quiet, than prejudicial to his health; it embitters, it must be allow'd, his most pleasing hours; but nevertheless seldom accelerates his passage to the grave. 'Tis a complaint that will however admit of relief, and practitioners must cautiously distinguish it. The intention to be pursued must

must be to oblige the irritating particles of the drug to retreat back to the larger vessels. To effect this, every method must be employed as will conduce to diminish the afflux of humours to the part affected. The minute fibres of the body being freed from their fluids pressing within them, by some great revulsion, assume a retrograde motion, and protrude their contents back into vessels whose diameter is greater, by which means the offending particles may be carried to parts better disposed to receive them, and promote their exit ; or in their course thro' the vessels, become enveloped with some viscous part of our fluids, and be thereby prevented from action. Evacuants by the revulsion they occasion, may greatly conduce to effect it. The irritation excited by a brisk cathartic, occasions for a time a greater afflux of the blood to the vessels of the abdomen. The operation of such remedies cannot but be useful, if the constitution of the patient will admit of it. But in case all attempts to draw back the offending particles prove unsuccessful, methods must be employed to

to enlarge the narrow tubes, and thereby enable them to pass. Every remedy, whose office it is to relax, must here prove useful. Fomentations, nitrous Remedies, and tepid Baths, are the most certain helps. These means will speedily communicate relief, more especially, if when the body is thus prepared, the use of mild diaphoretic drinks be advised, and for some time continued.

The unexperienced practitioner must be advised not to administer Mercurials to persons of a scorbutic or foul habit.---- The mildest preparations of Mercury, even the *Æthiops Mineral*, if given where there is either an acidity or alcalescency of the fluids, become highly acrimonious, and operate with the greatest violence. I have known half a scruple of *Æthiops* administered to a delicate female, where the *primæ viæ* abounded with acidities, excite the most violent spasms of the intestines. Upon evacuating the same, the *Æthiops* was given without producing the least ill effect. If this, the mildest preparation of Mercury, could

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be productive of such dangerous symptoms, what afflicting consequences must ensue the administration of the rougher kinds, which are more or less active in proportion as they are more or less irritating ! Mercurials when received into the blood of scorbutical persons, not only serve to produce pains and aches in different parts of the body ; but likewise hasten the dissolution of the vital fluid, and thereby increase the mortality of the disease. Many authors have nevertheless recommended this class of remedies in these disorders, but led thereto neither by the sanction of reason, nor the authority of experience.

The Rheumatisms which affect the youthful and middle-aged part of mankind, owe their origin chiefly to an acrimonious or scorbutical state of the fluids. Persons in an advanced age are oftentimes afflicted with Rheumatisms of the same kind, tho' this disorder, when it commences late in life, is rather to be attributed to a viscid state of the fluids, and too rigid fibres. The inhabitants of this country are obnoxious to the scurvy ; in
almost

almost all their complaints there is some admixture of it. Persons who have long continued in a disorderly method of living, the tone of whose fibres are broken down by violent and irregular exertions, the texture of whose blood is destroyed by an extreme neglect of the nonnaturals, are mostly exposed to what I may here term the Scorbutical Rheumatism. Youths and females of lax habits are mostly subject to this species of the disorder, arising from a constitutional acrimonious state of the humours. The solids, such is their primitive contexture, being unable to contract on their contained fluids with a force equal to that with which they are opposed from within, the motion of the blood becomes languid, and the body is deprived of all the advantages which it is adapted to receive from a well regulated circulation. Hence the fluids never gain that maturity which is essential to health, and from the weak tone of the organs of digestion, are supplied with substances crude and offensive to nature. Circulating in the vessels of our frame, the blood at this time
affords

affords but little nourishment, becomes more and more unfit for the purposes of life, and at length prejudices those vessels it was intended to support. In persons whose humours are thus circumstanced, we often observe itchy eruptions, sometimes bluish spots on the body, a wan complexion, and but little strength. Their pains are oftentimes very acute, and so wandering as to pass from one limb to another the same day. For as the disease is occasioned by the presence of a species of saline particles, fluctuating in the fluids, the pain may easily become shifted from one part to another, and is rarely fixed, unless when found in the substance of the bones, as in some cases of the confirmed scurvy; for the saline particles once settled here, cannot be transmitted elsewhere, the continuity of the vessels being interrupted, many terminating in the substance of the bone.

The intentions of cure must be, to strengthen the weak tone of the fibres, and to correct or carry off the acrid fluids. To effect this, extreme attention must be
given

given to the organs of digestion. The strengthening and enabling them to perform their office in perfection, is the capital part necessary to the cure. The digestion repaired, every part gradually gains strength; and this circumstance practitioners ought ever to attend to, not in this disorder only, but in all others arising from weak fibres. The organs of digestion being strengthened, the motions of every part of the frame become gradually more perfect, as such nourishment is conveyed thereto, as is favorable to nature, and productive of strength. If time be allowed for perfecting the cure, the practitioner has no occasion to regard any other curative indication. Nature thus strengthened is sufficient to the work. But if the pains are so very acute as to be scarcely tolerable, if the constitution be already exhausted by their long continuance and constant watching, it would be necessary to administer such remedies as are calculated for sheathing the acrimony of the humours, and appeasing the agonizing spasms. Such diet should be recommended

ed as will conduce to strengthen and dilute. The practitioner in treating this species of the Rheumatism, has the noblest opportunity of displaying the utility of his profession. The path by which he is to proceed, is incumbered by no intricacies, and his success the most certain possible. But let him cautiously distinguish this species from others; in this the pains are exquisitely acute, and the least error in the medical treatment, exposes the unhappy sufferer to the most afflicting consequences. I speak here from a remembrance of my own feelings. Nature granted me a body of tender structure, little strength, and strong sensibility.---- Hence influenced by causes which it would be fruitless here to recount, in the more early part of my life, I was a constant prey to this species of the Rheumatism. For several years unable to rise from my seat, and frequently so exquisitely sensible to external impressions, as not to be able to sustain the tread of a saluting friend in my chamber. Exposed to the attempts of practitioners, who mistook the
cause

cause of my complaints, my small remains of strength were exhausted in sustaining their unsuccessful experiments. Proceeding upon erroneous principles, they only aggravated my pains, 'till after several years' conflict, pitying providence held forth its reviving hand at the moment I was sinking into the grave.

The too great abundance of the blood will occasion Rheumatic Pains. The tender coats of the capillary vessels being continually upon the stretch, must excite uneasy sensations. The least motion must augment the disease, as likewise the action of heat. The former by exciting to more frequent contractions the over-distended vessels ; the latter by causing an expansion of the blood in vessels which are already disposed to burst. Irritating remedies given in this case, as has frequently been done, induce some fatal disorder ; by impelling the blood with great impetuosity into vessels already too much distended, an extravasation ensues, and if this happens in the head, lungs, &c. the patient expires. Persons thus afflicted, are most com-

commonly of a plethoric habit, florid complexion, and saliant vessels. Rest must be recommended, and Venesection may be depended on as the only means necessary to the cure. The most acute pains disappear immediately after its being employed. I remember more particularly a Rheumatic Head-ach of the most violent kind, accompanied with a dreadful delirium, that ceased instantly after the operation. The tender coats of the capillary vessels being thereby relieved from their extreme distention, the pain ceased, and nature reassumed its functions.

That the blood might circulate freely, it is necessary that a certain just proportion be maintained between the crassamentum and serum. Men of robust habits, whose stations in life oblige them to employ great labour or exercise, are more particularly liable to obstructions arising from the defect of fluidity in the blood, The continual perspiration kept up by their extreme labour, exhausts the fluid part of their humours; and as such persons most commonly consume much solid diet, and seldom

dom employ a sufficient quantity of diluting fluids, the crassamentum abounds, the blood becomes exceedingly thick, is unable to pass thro' the minute vessels, and form Rheumatisms which are more or less difficult to cure in proportion to their continuance. In this case little relief can be expected, unless sought for upon the first attack, and even then the cure is attended with many difficulties. The longer the obstruction continues, the more fixed it becomes; the stagnating fluid losing gradually its small remains of fluidity, and its solid part reduced, if I may use the term, to an extract, the vessels are totally closed up, and the disease becomes immoveable by any of the efforts of art.

Cases of this nature serve extremely well to convince the injudicious of the prejudice of recommending indiscriminately Diaphoretics for the cure of these complaints. Administered in this species of the disorder, they carry off the thinner part of the fluids, render the obstruction already formed more obstinate, and dispose the whole frame to the most fatal dis-

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orders. A cessation from labour and exercise must be here recommended, a partial abstinence from solid food, and the use of warm infusions of salutary herbs. A warm bath might be recommended, but the patient should by no means be placed in a bed afterwards, and every means must be employed to prevent a copious perspiration from ensuing: for the body circled by a warm fluid, imbibes much from it, which enters into the mass of the humours and dilutes them; but an abundant perspiration if encouraged after, not only carries off what has been imbibed, but much besides, and leaves the blood more dense than it was before.

The foregoing observations may be applied to those cases which are produced by a viscid state of the blood, and rigid tone of the solids. The excess of crassamentum happens most commonly to persons yet in the vigour of life, and to some aged persons, chiefly such who have omitted Venesection; but the viscid state of the fluids, and the rigid fibres are peculiar to the old. Their age disposes them
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to this complaint. But it must be observed, that the fault of the fluids here assigned as the cause of the Rheumatism affecting persons in an advanced age, is to be sought for in the serum and lymph, rather than in the mass of blood. Nature in decay shews its infirmity first in those vessels which are most remote from the heart. Besides, as the capillary tubes of aged bodies lose their flexibility as age advances, the passage of the fluids thro' them must be more slow than in the early parts of life. Hence, as the fluids owe their tenuity in a great measure to their motion, they must gradually become more dense, and their circulation in many parts cease. In proportion likewise as age steals upon the constitution, the *minima vascula* cease to act on the fluids contained within them; these fluids thus at rest, soon lose their fluidity, and a total induration of the part commences. This is very evident to the touch upon feeling the bodies of aged persons, and that change which arises to the external superficies, happens likewise to the parts within, tho' more slowly, their

substance abounding with more fluids, and the inspissation of them not proceeding so fast.

I see but few reasons that can be alledged in support of that aversion which most practitioners have to bleeding aged persons. Wherever there is an appearance of obstructions in any essential part, nothing gives relief to aged persons so early. The cuticular discharge in persons advanced in life, must be far less than what it was in their more early days; hence there must be an increased quantity of fluids. The diameter of the vessels of aged persons is less than those of youthful bodies, consequently there must be less space for this superabundant quantity of fluids to flow in. A person so circumstanced must therefore be liable to all the inconveniencies of a plethora, and to some others. The rigid state of the vessels undoubtedly secures them against the evils of a too violent distension; but at the same time it renders them incapable of contracting on their contents with the facility of juvenile vessels. Hence the fluids are
more

more liable to rest and to form obstructions. Upon simply observing the blood-vessels on the surface of an aged body, the distention of the coats of the veins may easily be seen, and the hard quick pulse of the arteries indicate the incroaching rigidity of their coats, and the difficult passage of the blood thro' the capillary tubes. The diseases likewise to which aged persons are subject, serve to prove this, as they are such as arise from obstructions, and their death is most commonly preceded by some induration of the viscera. Venesection therefore seasonably administered, must contribute greatly to the relief of the maladies of aged people, and to the prolongation of their lives. By relieving the distension of the coats of the vessels, they must contract with more ease, and the fluids remaining will glide more freely, and be less liable to rest. But besides Venesection, the use of warm diluting liquids greatly conduce to the relief of their infirmities, and preservation of their healths. Such fluids attenuate the blood, and facilitate its passage thro' the now contracting tubes

tubes; the solids themselves receive benefit from their moderate yet frequent use; the particles of the liquid insinuate themselves into the interstices of the drying fibres, continue to them their flexibility, and procrastinate, as it were, old age. Warm infusions of salutary herbs within, produce the same friendly effect as baths and fomentations without, relaxing the rigid fibres, promoting the oscillatory motion of the vessels, and preserving to the fluids their necessary fluidity.

Proceeding upon these principles, the practitioner may greatly allay the pains and aches incident to old age. I have reason to apprehend that a prudent attention to these circumstances would greatly conduce to prolong life beyond what is now accounted the natural period. I am certain however, it would alleviate those afflictions which so frequently embitter the declining season of life, and that if it conduces not to the prolonging the term of our days, will at least enable us to descend into the grave in peace.

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The continuing a ligature tightly bound on a part, has been assign'd as one cause of Rheumatic pains. The passage of the fluids being interrupted, the vessels below the ligature become greatly distended by the pressure continued behind, hence the various ramifications of the veins are stretched to their utmost dimensions, the tender coats of the capillary tubes overstrained, sometimes ruptured, and the red globules forced into the serous vessels. Hence when the ligature is removed, pain continues in the part 'till the impaired tone of the vessels in that part is recovered, and 'till the fluids reassume their accustomed course thro' their proper vessels. To accelerate this, nothing will be found more effectual than frictions and mild spiritous applications. Friction by exciting the languid vessels to motion, prompt them to discharge their contents, and the mild spirituous applications are proper to restore the weakened tone of the parts. Internal remedies can but little avail here; for, as these complaints happen in the limbs, the distance of the diseased part is so

so remote from the stomach and alimentary tube, by which all remedies must pass, as to prevent any timely effect on the part diseased. This species of Rheumatism happens sometimes from the surgeon's placing a too tight ligature on the arm or foot, preparative to Venesection, and from a pernicious custom with some persons of tying their garters too tight, whence arise a numbness, swelling, and constant pain in the leg. Persons prepossessed with an opinion of the utility of this custom, should observe that nothing is more conducive to health, than the continuing a free circulation, and that no method can more effectually conduce to oppose this, than the practice here censured.

It is not uncommon to observe Rheumatisms in this country, which are the effects of venereal excesses. The unrestrained licentiousness of both sexes, exposes them to the most cruel complaints: a slight taint of venereal infection is not so easily removed as the generality of those who have been infected imagine. The simple disappearance of the disease is not
a cure,

a cure, nor tho' he has felt no symptoms for a course of years, the man who has once unfortunately contracted it, ought not to congratulate himself upon a perpetual exemption. The Lymph once corrupted, continues so without producing any ill effects for years. But at length the evil becomes so extended as to produce the most afflicting complaints; in the stage of advanced life, see a man looking back on the transactions of his past days, and congratulating himself upon having escaped all the evil consequences of illicit amours but a slight Gonorrhea, which he recollects gave him but little trouble, and was soon cured. But tho' after so long intermission, he shall not escape the punishment due to the contempt of sacred institutions, and the injured rights of society. Pains gradually consume away his frame, and that stage of life which brings no pleasure with it, is embittered with accumulated evils, and consumed in unceasing yet fruitless regrets.

The Lymph once infected by the venereal Virus, has never been found to

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clear itself therefrom by the aid of nature alone; on the contrary, the infection gradually expands itself over the frame, corrupts the fluids, and undermines all the springs of life. The Lymph at length acquires a viscid and acrimonious nature, ceases to circulate, corrodes its vessels, deforms with nodes, and provokes with corroding pangs the part whereon it may happen to settle. Happily for wretched mortals there are means for relief. Heaven, when it permitted the venereal infection, to exert its ravages o'er the globe, of its abundant mercy gave us the means of cure. Moderate doses of Mercury, with the free use of a decoction of the Woods, eradicate this disease in its most inveterate state. But the strength of the constitution should be strictly attended to on undertaking the cure. Mild and gradual means are most successful. Rough and hasty measures can hardly be attended with success, or followed without danger. The tone of the solids already decayed, will not admit of powerful exertions. I regard the Mercurial preparations as specifics in
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this disorder; but the irritation they occasion in debilitated constitutions, when injudiciously administered, discredits the remedy and retards the cure. I have often attempted to eradicate this disorder by the decoction of the woods alone. I remember a case which had been vainly attempted by a variety of mercurial medicines for a long time, yield to this simple remedy. The constitution was exceedingly impaired by the many ill-directed attempts to effect a cure, and unable to sustain the operation of active remedies. I therefore recommended the simple decoction of Sassafras alone, which continued for a few weeks, was productive of the desired success. The effect of this simple remedy is easily accounted for; the Sassafras abounds with an essential oil, very friendly to the nerves. The wood boiled in water communicates this oil in a great measure thereto, with some of its earthy parts, which correspond in effect with the beneficial qualities of the oil. This decoction strengthens the infirm fibres, promotes their action, and increases perspiration.

The fluid at the same time attenuates the viscid fluids, and prepares them for motion.

But this decoction, it must be observed, should not be too strong. If abounding too much with the virtues of the wood, instead of simply strengthening the fibres, it may irritate them, bring on a copious perspiration, and before the fluids are sufficiently attenuated, thereby carry off their small remains of fluidity, and render the disease incurable. The remedy should be so prepared as to produce the different effects uniformly; if the essential oil too much abounds, the ill consequences will ensue that are just recounted; if, on the contrary, the decoction be not sufficiently impregnated therewith, the constitution will most certainly be impoverished thereby.

The salutary effects of warm diluting liquors are not so well known as they merit to be, where the fibres are rigid, and the fluids inclined to viscosity; for by relaxing the stiffened solids, and dissolving the too thick blood, the circulation is aided in the
most

most beneficial manner. On the contrary where the fault is a weak state of the solids, and the extreme thinness of the fluids, the strong decoction of some warm diaphoretic wood or herb, admirably strengthens the one, and carries off the superabundant quantity of the other. But in this case, the decoction should be strong, and the quantity of liquor drank but small, the body wanting no addition of fluid, the intention being to fortify only.

Having thus gone through the different species of the Rheumatism, and pointed out the principal indications for the cure, I shall here add something more for the notice of those who may be willing to preserve themselves from its future attack, and are desirous of avoiding the many other diseases to which the same causes expose them. In this and every country, men are apt to consume more nourishment than is necessary for the support of their bodies. Eating should be carry'd no farther than is necessary to preserve the strength of the body, and whatever is taken in more than this, may be look'd upon as fuel
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lain up to feed some future disease. When the stomach is distended with nourishment more than is necessary to supply the demands of the blood, how evident are the effects which must thereby be produced on the body? The superabundant substance received into the mass of the fluids, destroys in part its fluidity. Hence is laid the foundation of future obstructions, the basis of the most obstinate diseases.

Let a man then, the moment he finds himself disposed to indulge the unreasonable demands of a depraved appetite, consider that the taking in more than is sufficient to sustain him 'till the next meal, is assuring to himself future pangs and torments. I am not of the opinion of those who would banish from table all succulent meats and nutritious gravies. I am certain that we err much more in the quantity than in the qualities of our food. Nothing appears so well calculated to supply the waste of our own bodies as the juices of healthy animals. Nothing assimilates with our own fluids so easily, nor communicates such speedy refreshment. I have often
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recommended to persons recovering from an acute disease, the gravy of meat moderately dressed, and have found it nourish without fatiguing the organs of digestion, as solid food naturally does. The gravy which flows from meat, either roasted or boiled, immediately on cutting it, is the most balsamic part of the fluids of the animal, the very essence of his being. How Physicians could have imagined it pernicious, I cannot determine. I am well assured that neither sound Philosophy nor Experience can be brought to vindicate so preposterous an opinion. Meats moderately boiled or roasted, nourish much more and are more salutary to the body, than such as are commonly termed *well done*. For these last supply the body with only solid particles of the animal substance, deprived of what may be termed their spirit, and a mere *caput mortuum*. Besides, the organs of digestion are much more fatigued in performing their office, and the body is at length but imperfectly nourished.

Bread likewise nourishes less than the flesh of animals, its nature being less similar

lar to our own, and not admitting of so easy an admixture with our fluids, however its effects are salutary, and the use of it not to be disrecommended. But those who advise a total abstinence from flesh, and say that the only way to attain longævity, is to live upon bread alone, are greatly mistaken, as their opinions cannot be supported by any argument of force. The inference drawn from the rustic part of mankind, and some barbarous nations, where the consumption of flesh is but little known and diseases rare, rather serve to prove what I have already observed, that the ill effects we complain of are to be attributed more to the quantity than the quality of our food. Besides, it must be observed that the universal Parent has of his great wisdom, given to these people organs adapted to the penury of their situation. If, as it sometimes undoubtedly happens, an infant is produced among them of weak fibres and sensible habit, the mode of life proves pernicious, and the child dies before it arrives to puberty.

'Tis

'Tis not a refined method of living that renders our bodies delicate, tho' it may contribute to continue them so; but on the contrary, the methods of living we have embraced, are the only means that could possibly have supported us. Bodies of gross fibres and small sensibility, require no delicacies; bodies of tender constitution and delicate sensibility, can be nourished by no other means. From these considerations I am induced to regard the objections made to the common articles of food, as very ill-grounded, and believe, if we err, we err in nourishing ourselves to an excess, not in living too well.

Whatever tends to preserve the freedom of circulation, tends to prevent the Rheumatism; and this may be perfected by the use of a sufficiently fluid diet used not to excess; the quantity is to be ever determined by the necessities of our frame, and the quality let it be more or less succulent in proportion to the delicacy of the fibres, and the weakness of the organization.

In removing this disease whenever it has seized upon a constitution, the prac-

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tititioner must be sensible from what has preceded, that his principal care must be directed to discover its cause; this once found, the cure is perfected without difficulty, and if not found, the effect of every remedy is uncertain if not dangerous. I have solely endeavoured to point out the nature and distinctions of the different species of the Rheumatism, and the indications necessary to be pursued in order to work a cure; well-knowing that to a man acquainted with the science he professes, no other information is required. The publication of recipes can be of little benefit to him, and will serve only to form quacks, and prompt ignorant persons to assume the management of dangerous diseases. 'Tis the duty of every one to oppose these public assassins, and I should have reflected with dissatisfaction on any publication I might be instrumental in ushering upon the world, had I the least aided in encouraging their enormities, or augmenting their crimes. My intentions will be sufficiently known to the candid and intelligent of the profession; 'tis their approbation

probation I am anxious of acquiring, and sincerely wish that the perusal of this work may increafe (tho' but a little) their power of being useful to mankind-----a capacity which, where the mind is not mercenary, will be ever productive of the noblest gratifications.



O B S E R V A T I O N S

O N

The Medical Treatment

O F

The late Rev. Mr. S T E R N E,
During his last ILLNESS.

MR. STERNE was, as I am informed by the best authority, endued with a constitution of great sensibility and moderate strength. He was neither intemperate in his diet, nor greatly averse to generous indulgence. The diseases to which he must have been chiefly exposed, were of the spasmodic kind, produced either by an immediate affection of the nervous system, or an acrimonious state of the fluids. The Pleurisy under the attack of which he died, was evidently of this latter kind. To be assured of the medical treatment employed, let me quote his own letter, an authority sufficiently credible

credible to be opposed to the evidence of a thousand witnesses.

Extract from Mr STERNE'S Letter to Mrs J.

TUESDAY.

“YOUR pour friend is scarce able to write—He has been at death's door this week, with a Pleurisy—I was bled three times on Thursday, and blistered on Friday.”

The practitioners who were call'd in on this occasion, and prescribed bleeding and blistering, undoubtedly acted according to the rules of art. The too strict attachment to these rules, is what I censure, and wish hereafter to prevent.

The state of the solids of the Rev. Patient, was great sensibility and moderate strength. Let us examine what effect the three bleedings on Thursday, and blisters on Friday, must have produced on a frame thus organized, and in this disease. The most probable cause of the complaint, was an acrimonious serum pitching on the nervous membranes of the pleura, exciting them to continual spasms, accelerating the whole

whole circulation, and forcing the sensible fibres of the arterial coats, to the most irregular and convulsive contractions. This state could not be of long duration. *The duration of spasms is in direct proportion to the strength of fibres, and in inverse proportion to their sensibility.* The extreme sensibility and moderate strength of the patient must then have rendered the long continuance of violent spasms impossible; for the sensibility of fibres affected with spasms, serve only to aggravate their disorderly motions, and exhaust their little strength. The disease having thus proceeded, as the cause remains, what change must next ensue? The spasms continuing as long as strength remains, a relaxation follows; this relaxation must be very considerable in the Pleura affected, and in the more nervous parts where the strength is but small, and the sensibility great.

The parts which are less exposed to the violence of the Malady, and endued with less sensibility than the others, must be but little impaired; hence in these, an irregular circulation only will be found, whilst

whilst in the other vessels considerably weakened, and almost totally deprived of their tone, a stagnation of the fluids, the acrimony of which cannot be at all decreased, must take place. The small vessels thus debilitated, convey not their contents to the larger ones with sufficient speed, but continue to receive their customary supply from the heart. This supply, it must likewise be observed, may on this occasion be more abundant than is customary, the heart contracting more frequently than when the body is free from disease. Hence in expelling but little, and receiving very much, the capillary vessels must be extremely distended. This distension must produce pain to the patient, tho' not so acute as before, as the fibres of the part affected have partly lost their sensibility. For *the sensibility and elasticity of fibres are somewhat dependant on each other*; therefore when the elasticity of a part is impaired, its sensibility is diminished likewise. This must be the progress of the disease in bodies similar to that of the person whose case is here cited,

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and being known, will aid greatly in the discovery of the means that were fit to be pursued in order to effect a cure.

During the first stage of the disorder, it has been observed there was an acrid serum lodged in the vessels of the pleura and parts adjacent, irritating the nervous membranes, and affecting with spasms, not those parts only, but the whole vascular system. What were the indications to be pursued? To correct or evacuate the offending particles, allay the spasms, and restore again the diminished tone of the vessels. Bleeding, tho' three times repeated, could but little conduce to answer either purpose. I believe it would not be difficult to prove, that this operation rather served to impede both the first and last. Wherever there is a spasm, the diameter of the vessels affected therewith is diminished; and their contractions more powerful than when the body is in a state of health. The circulation is consequently more rapid, and the blood driven with impetuosity into the small and tender vessels, must excite pain, by the great distension occasioned thereby

thereby in these vessels: bleeding is therefore employed to alleviate this distension; but in doing this it is evident, that it relieves a symptom only, and not in the least affects the cause of the disease. This operation then repeated three times in this case, served only to diminish the quantity of the blood, and exhaust the powers of nature, but conduced not in the least to correct the acrimonious fluids, the cause of the disease, nor relieve the spasms, the only purposes required to be answered. It is apparent to me, that the ill-consequence of such a large evacuation appeared the next day. Nature extremely debilitated by thus being deprived of its principal support, fell into extreme languor. Hence the blister seems to have been ordered at that time. Blisters act two ways on the human frame: They quicken by their irritation the contractions of the vascular system, and evacuate a portion of the serum. Supposing the fore-mentioned languor had not taken place, it is evident that the application of blisters must augment the disease. The bleed-

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ings having been ordered to allay the impetuous motion of the blood, it would have been the highest degree of folly to order blisters, unless that motion had in a great measure ceased, and a contrary affection of the body succeeded, as they are never applied without quickning the circulation.

But supposing the pulse of the arteries changed from extreme quickness to extreme languor, the application of blisters tho' commonly advised, was useless, nay more, they must be pernicious in this case. They must prove ineffectual for the purpose they are intended to answer, if the tone of the fibres is considerably impaired before their application, and must prove prejudicial, supposing the tone of the fibres not considerably impaired, by the violent irritation they must occasion in a sensible habit: For where the tone of the fibres is ever so little destroyed, the great purpose to be pursued is, to recover it. Hence, as irritation ever weakens the part irritated in proportion to the exertions it is forced to, it is evident that blisters must
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only serve to impair the tone of the fibres yet more, by increasing the irritation.

It may be alledged in defence of the frequent bleedings employed, that it is a custom authorized by the most celebrated practitioners to bleed, 'till the quickness of the pulse is decreased, the arterial coats relaxed, and the pain lessened: Notwithstanding the authority appealed to, I believe it may be easily proved that this rule is very fallacious. In persons of a sensible habit, the most trifling causes occasion a quickness of the pulse. In this case, the acrimonious serum not being corrected, continued irritating the vessels thro' which it passed, and provoked them to more frequent contractions, so long as any remains of sensibility were discovered. The pains likewise which continued to be felt in the pleura, must be owing to the acrid serum still lodged there, and irritating the nervous fibres of the parts tho' relaxed; for the fibres lose not entirely their sensibility, altho' their tone be greatly impaired.

The reader from reflecting on the foregoing, will observe, that the principal purposes

poses to be pursued in cases similar to that of the Rev. Mr. STERNE, are to correct the acrid serum causing the complaint, and appeasing the spasms, neither of which purposes were properly followed here. The methods most likely to have succeeded, were to have administered copiously the warm infusions of salutary herbs or flowers, incapable of irritation, such as the *Veronica*, *Melissa*, *Althea*, *Flor. Chamomæl*, &c. Such liquids would greatly aid to correct and carry off the offending serum, by promoting all the fluid secretions, allay the spasms, and preserve the tone of the irritated fibres. Tepid fomentations and relaxing remedies with the fore-going cautiously employed, must have indubitably succeeded. But I would have advised neither Venesection nor Blisters. The purposes they serve to answer, were not indicated here, and the effects they ever occasion, were such as should have been at this time particularly avoided.

